

REMARKS

Summary

As discussed in detail below, new independent Claim 44 recites allowable subject matter and amended Claim 37 is supported by the specification and as a result, satisfies 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Therefore, the rejection of Claims 37-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, should be withdrawn, and because this is the only rejection in the case, the case is now in allowable form.

Status of the claims

Claims 37-51 are pending. Claims 37-39 have been amended to improve their form, and Claims 40-51 have been added. Claims 37 and 44 are independent.

Requested action

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Allowable subject matter

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 37-39 would be allowed if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as set forth below.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that these claims contain allowable subject matter. As discussed in detail below, Claim 37 is supported by the

specification and therefore satisfies 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, so that Claim 37 and its dependent claims are in allowable form.

Rejection

Claims 37-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, because independent Claim 37 allegedly is not supported by the specification, since the locking member 6 corresponds to the engaging member, the sealing member 3 corresponds to the capping member, and the locking member 6 does not slide relative to the capping member.

This rejection is respectfully traversed, since the sliding member can correspond to (but is not limited to) portions of (e.g., shaft 2a) or the entire feeding member 2, which according to the specification slides relative to the sealing member 3 (see paragraph 81 of the substitute specification and Figures 8 and 9, which show sliding movement of the sealing member 3 in the axial direction of feeding member 2) and maintains engagement with sealing member 3 (see paragraph 82 of the substitute specification). In addition, paragraphs 110-112 of the substitute specification and Figures 8 and 9 disclose the relative movement of the sealing member 3 and the container 1A to open the port 1g, thereby producing relative movement between sealing member 3 and feeding member 2.

Since Claim 37 is supported by the specification and drawings, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, be withdrawn.

New independent Claim 44

New independent Claim 44 relates to a toner supply container detachably mountable to an image forming apparatus. The apparatus comprises a toner container, a feeding member, a cap, and a sliding portion.

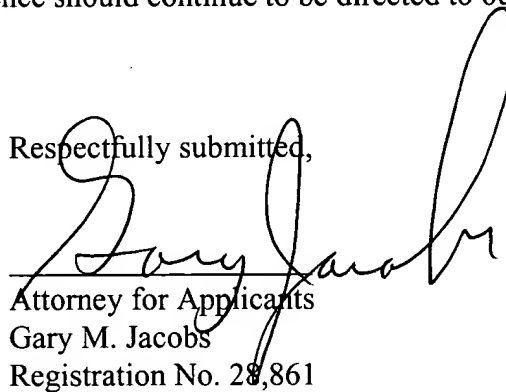
The toner container is configured to accommodate toner and has a discharge opening, at one end thereof, for permitting discharge of the toner. The feeding member is configured and positioned to feed the toner in the toner container toward the discharge opening. The feeding member is supported at an end thereof opposite from the one end of the toner container so as to maintain a rotational center of the feeding member. The cap is rotatable integrally with the feeding member. The cap is configured and positioned to seal the discharge opening, and the cap is movable relative to the toner container in a direction of an axis of the feeding member to open and close the discharge opening. The cap is provided with a coupling portion configured and positioned to receive a rotational driving force from a main assembly of the apparatus, and is supportable by the main assembly so as to maintain a rotational center thereof. The sliding portion is configured and positioned to permit movement of the cap in the direction of the axis of the feeding member to open and close the cap so that opposite end portions of the feeding member are substantially supported when the cap is at an open position and at a closing position.

In contrast, the patent to Ichikawa, et al. previously cited against the claims, is not understood to disclose or suggest the feeding member, the cap, and the sliding portion recited by Claim 44. For this reason, Applicants submit that Claim 44, and its dependent claims, are in allowable form.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the claims are now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary M. Jacobs", is written over a horizontal line.

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